

NEW JERSEY COLLEGES:



"The Castle" dominates scene on 10-acre Rutherford campus. Part of modern gymnasium appears at right. BELOW: Teaneck counterpart with some of massed flags representing foreign students attending Fairleigh Dickinson. Its gymnasium appears in background.



By **JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM**

LAY aside preconceived collegiate notions in appraising Fairleigh Dickinson College. Think not in terms of thick ivy clinging to Tudor Gothic walls or in terms of colonial charters and the classic picture of a few scholars gathered at the feet of the master. Lay aside preconceived notions or be hopelessly lost in the midst of one of America's most intriguing educational ventures.

Fairleigh Dickinson began as a junior college in 1942 and in 1948 expanded to four-year status—which makes it eight years old as a full-fledged college. Eight years old and already an enrollment of 6,500 students makes it third largest in New

Jersey behind Rutgers and Seton Hall. Eight years old and already Fairleigh Dickinson is large enough to require two campuses in Rutherford and Teaneck. Eight years old and already it has founded a graduate school and a college school of dentistry. Fairleigh Dickinson is in fact a university in all but name.

Educators agree that never before has there been anything like Fairleigh Dickinson. At that point agreement stops. Naturally sensational growth is viewed with alarm in some colleges, particularly those where smallness is thought to be a virtue in itself. An informed observer can't help but recognize, nevertheless, that often those who most view with alarm often know

'COMMUNITY' COLLEGE

Bergen County's Fairleigh Dickinson, With Campuses in Rutherford and Teaneck, Has Mushroomed to 6,500 Students in 14 Years (Including Original Founding as a Junior College) to Become an Educational Marvel

least about this incredible Bergen County institution.

PERHAPS there is an intrinsic evil in rapid growth. If so, the Middle State Assn. of Colleges and Secondary Schools didn't find it when it accredited Fairleigh Dickinson in 1952. If there is, the 35 area high school principals who make up the college's vibrantly active board of educational

directors aren't aware of it. These are good yardsticks of academic fitness, as good as most colleges can show.

Most important, the 6,500 students who keep Fairleigh Dickinson's classrooms filled day and night seem to be the most eloquent testimonial the college could have. These are people who want a college education—and these are people who in a high percentage of cases wouldn't get that

This is the 21st of a series of articles which not only describe New Jersey's colleges and universities, but tell the story of the growth and traditions of individual colleges within the state, picture their roles in modern education and explain how they plan to meet what has been called "an impending tide of students."

Next Sunday: Caldwell College for Women.



LEFT: Sturdy stairway serves student movement to and from classrooms and labs in remodeled castle which cost \$350,000 to build.



Dr. Peter Sammartino, president, and Dr. Ralph Bunche, undersecretary of the UN and Nobel prize winner, at recent college convocation where the latter was awarded a doctor's degree. Flanking them are the "Knights" who appear at all Fairleigh Dickinson functions. **BELOW:** Swans on pond beside new classroom building on Teaneck campus also decorate school escutcheon. Castle is another symbol.

education if it wasn't for this highly unusual college in their midst.

Some day history may sit in judgment of an institution which has gone from nothing to 6,500 students in 14 years (including the junior college years). Meanwhile Fairleigh Dickinson can't wait for the judgment of time. There is too much to be done now, and besides, there is ample reason to believe that time's verdict will be approving. Time will not necessarily be prejudiced by a belief that only a few are capable or deserving of a college education.

WHERE will all this spreading out stop? Dr. Peter Sammartino, president from the start, doesn't know. "We would like to catch our breath," he admits, although the notion of energetic Peter Sammartino wasting time on breath-catching is ridiculous to those who know him best. His restless resourcefulness is the spirit of Fairleigh Dickinson.

"We have no set patterns which can't be altered," says Dr. Sammartino. "We have no vested interests whose inertia has to be overcome. Vested interests are barnacles to a college. If a thing hasn't been done before, that doesn't discourage us from trying it. If it succeeds, fine. If it doesn't succeed, still fine. We drop it and get on to something else."

Fairleigh Dickinson's purpose always has been simple enough to use community resources to meet community needs. Initially that meant giving students in Rutherford and the immediate surrounding area a chance

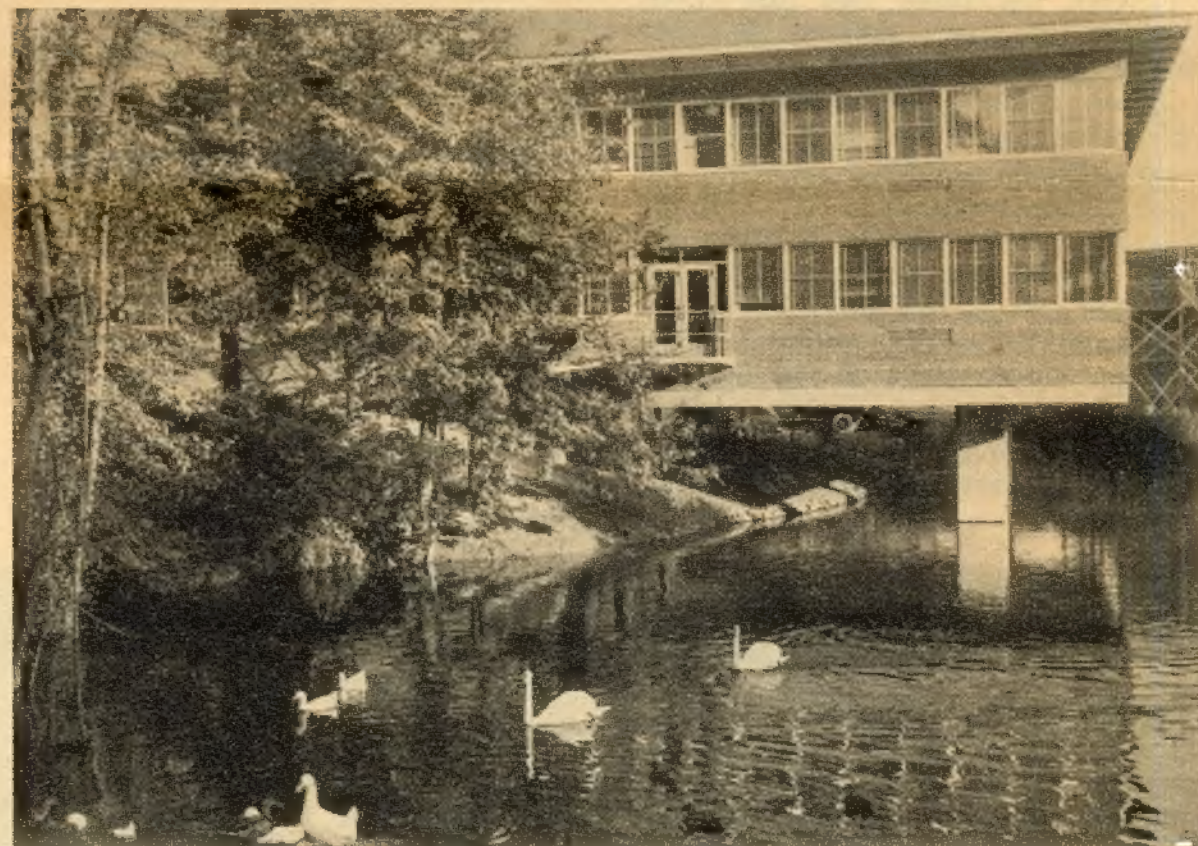
to get their feet in a college door. Surveys before the founding showed that only about one in 10 high school graduates in that area could afford to go away to college.

TODAY Fairleigh Dickinson's "community" spreads far beyond the confines of either Rutherford or Teaneck. It encompasses all of Bergen County, parts of Passaic, Essex, Hudson and Morris counties. It reaches throughout the state—students from all 21 counties attend Fairleigh Dickinson in spite of limited dormitory facilities. "Community" even spreads to many other states and even across the oceans—more than 20 foreign countries are represented at the college.

Community needs in higher education usually are easy to prove, and the very lack of educational opportunity that once characterized the Rutherford area is still visible in broad areas of New Jersey. The key to Fairleigh Dickinson's success therefore is the willingness of those who control community resources, both financial and intellectual, to rise to the challenge.

By all ordinary rules of logic, Fairleigh Dickinson should have expired quietly the same week it first breathed life. On Dec. 3, 1941, 15 high school principals sat down with Dr. Sammartino to indorse a community college in Rutherford. Four days later the Japanese Navy reduced Pearl Harbor to ruin. That should have been that, but Peter Sammartino never lets that be that.

The day after Pearl Harbor, nine principals and Dr. Sammartino met to



discuss whether to abandon the nebulous college or whether to continue. After hours of debate they voted, 5-4, to go ahead and empowered Dr. Sammartino to get ready—at a time when colleges all over the country were earnestly discussing how they might stay alive in the emergency. The college existed on paper, now to make it live.

THERE were some assets—\$50,000 in money, raised from local sources, with half donated by Col. Fairleigh S. Dickinson, one of the founders of the Rutherford surgical instrument firm known as Becton, Dickinson Co. The paper college had "The Castle," an old brownstone chateau bought and donated by Col. Dickinson. Most important it had Dr. Sammartino, a man

who could take an idea and make it soar.

Romance surrounded the Castle, built in 1886 by David B. Ivison who modeled its towers after the French chateau of Chaumont. The Castle cost \$350,000 to build and its medieval architecture made it a favorite "location" for the movie makers who once called Bergen County the film capital of America. But 1942 was no time for romance. The college had to remodel the Castle's 25 rooms into classrooms and laboratories.

Dr. Sammartino wasted no time on the formalities of being college president—not while the refurbishing of the old building called for every extra hand. Often he stoked the furnace or moved furniture between the more

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FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON

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usual tasks of drawing up a curriculum, hiring a faculty and enticing students to the young junior college. In September 1942, that first class of 153 students entered Fairleigh Dickinson, named for its principal benefactor.

SINCE then the growth has been amazing, phenomenal, extraordinary—use any adjective of astonishment and be assured of no valid contradiction. In considering the rapid rise, think of three main areas: Student enrollment, campus development and curriculum changes. The three are integral parts of the 14-year metamorphosis from junior college to university-in-all-but-name.

By 1945 enrollment reached 650, and by 1950, when the first four-year degrees were granted, Fairleigh Dickinson's student body totaled 2,072. Three years later that soared to 3,400 and the academic world gasped in wonderment. It should have saved its gasps—in 1954 enrollment jumped another 1,700 young men and women to 5,100 and last fall another jump of 1,400 brought enrollment up to 6,500. In the last two years alone, therefore, Fairleigh Dickinson has just about doubled in size! And it was big enough two years ago.

Some of the great growth can be accounted for by the fact that Fairleigh Dickinson in 1954 absorbed the facilities and students of the bankrupt Bergen Junior College at Teaneck. Still, at the time of the merger the Teaneck campus had only 150 day students and 300 evening students. Now daytime enrollment is at 750 and evening attendance near 2,000. That's the way Fairleigh Dickinson moves—old campus, new campus, it makes no difference.



Neatness of dress, required of all students at Fairleigh Dickinson, is evident in view of reading room of modern library at Rutherford.

ACTUALLY, the present size of the college represents neither the fondest hopes or the wildest dreams of the founders. No one ever remembers now what the hoped-for enrollment might have been in 1941. Certainly neither hopes or dreams of those days envisioned 6,500 students, land and buildings valued at more than five million dollars and endowment funds of more than two million dollars. Obviously both community needs and community resources were underrated, and it is to the everlasting credit of Rutherford and its many sister communities that as needs have manifested themselves, resources have kept apace.

The Rutherford campus has gone about as far as it can go in expansion. For one thing, the 10-acre campus has as many buildings as it can accommodate and still retain the charm of a spreading lawn and tall evergreen trees in front of the Castle. Four

major buildings have been erected since World War II, including a gymnasium, two classroom and laboratory buildings and a recently-dedicated library.

Perhaps more important, Fairleigh Dickinson's size is beyond the town of Rutherford's capacities. The impact of a day-time student enrollment of 1,650 and an evening enrollment of 2,100 is not as easy to handle in a suburban town like Rutherford as they might be in a city where thousands of extra people are no source of surprise. The parking situation has become acute, as one major example of what accompanies physical growth.

MUCH of Fairleigh Dickinson's future must be shaped at Teaneck, where 30 acres overlooking the Hackensack River invite expansion. When Fairleigh Dickinson took over the property two years ago, the junior college had a big modern gymnasium, a newly built small library, some labora-

tory facilities in a remodeled barn, two old houses converted into dormitories and a spacious one-time mansion.

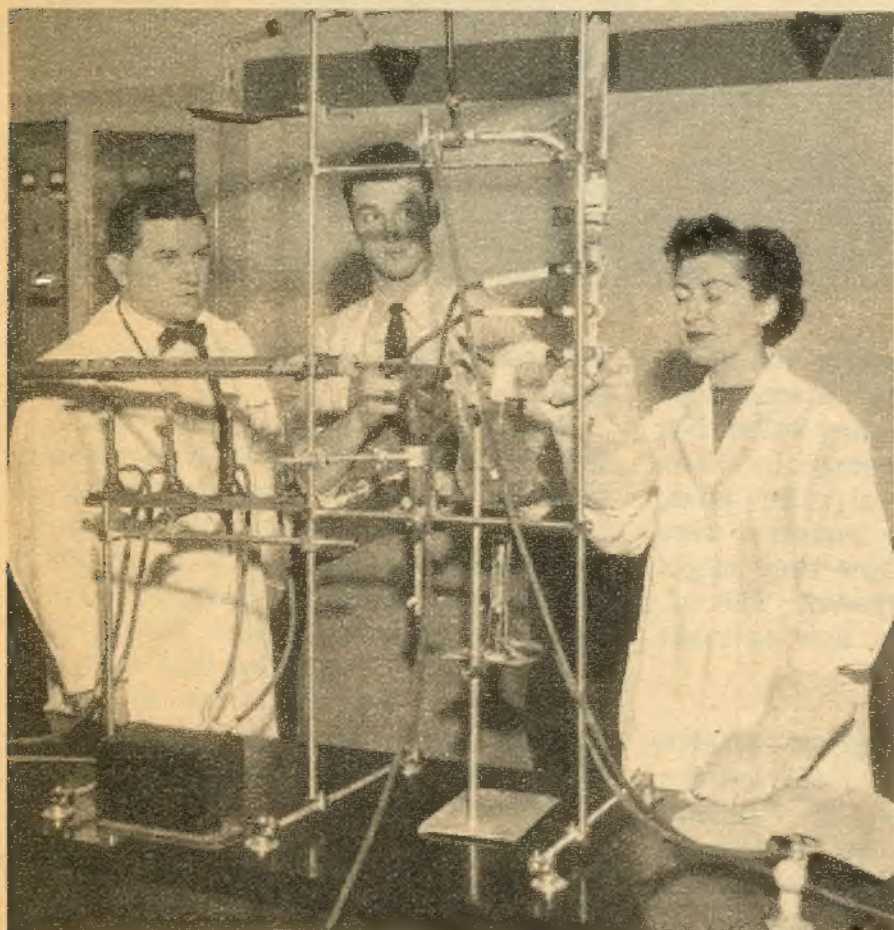
Two years have worked wonders on the banks of the Hackensack in Teaneck. Once-rundown wooden buildings glisten with new barn red paint. A new classroom building has been in use since last September, a men's dormitory was finished this winter and a new modern science building will be ready next fall.

High ingenuity is needed to keep pace with the leapfrogging enrollment. No space is ever wasted at Fairleigh Dickinson. Every laboratory can be used for a variety of science courses—and, if necessary, for any other course, scientific or otherwise. No room is sacred to one use, no professor can lay claim to exclusive use of a facility if the college can find additional uses for it. This is what Dr. Sammartino means when he says "we have no vested interests."

Fairleigh Dickinson wastes no money on architectural frills. Its buildings are highly functional and make liberal use of modern inexpensive materials. Glass and color are used extensively. The result: Good-looking, useful and highly practical buildings, quick to build and moderate in cost. On one section of the Teaneck campus some old Army barracks are being converted into classrooms but the free use of imagination and interior wood paneling make the structures a far cry from their old G.I. days.

SURPRISINGLY enough, Fairleigh Dickinson is not short of classrooms, even with its tripled growth in the last five years. The building program at Teaneck has added many classrooms not yet used to full capacity (bearing in mind, of course, that at Fairleigh Dickinson "full" use means never a moment when seats are empty). Despite its already startling enlargement, the college still has room to grow.

Most visitors who set out to understand Fairleigh Dickinson find themselves prepared to see the kind of chaos that often accompanies any-



Chemistry Instructor Patrick Conway (left) supervises catalyst experiment of Barbara Borbely, Passaic, and Paul



Snizek, Waldwick. Training dental hygienists (above) is one of the two-year courses for which college is noted.

thing pushing out in all directions. Nothing of the sort is experienced. Indeed, the calmness and confidence and order are possibly the most reassuring thing of all about the college.

The fact is that the changes at Fairleigh Dickinson have been reflected more in size of student body and physical plant than in terms of educational philosophy. New curricula are added quickly enough if the community need becomes apparent—and if community resources can be found to match the need.

New curricula are not just a matter of Dr. Sammartino or a trustee saying, "Well, let's add engineering, or let's add dentistry." The college's many interlocking advisory committees make it easy to get an idea for a new curriculum considered but it also makes it difficult for any but a sound educational addition to run the gamut of many-sided personalities considering it.

HIGH school principals still have a very prominent role in determining educational direction, as they did in the beginning. The original 15 principals have grown to 36, representing high schools in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic and Morris counties. These are the men who know what their graduates desire and what they need. Fairleigh Dickinson's rapid and apparently sound rise must be credited in large measure to the enthusiasm and assistance of these principals.

There are others who may help guide the educational course of the college. Dr. Sammartino never lacks for a balance wheel, or a dozen balance wheels if he feels the need. An educational policies committee, composed of leading area university representatives, gives advice. An active parents' council meets to suggest parental desires and students are invited to express their views to the president. The faculty naturally is closely consulted—so much so that the Fairleigh Dickinson faculty averages three full-scale meetings a month.

Thus Fairleigh Dickinson doesn't move with the precipitate curriculum changing which might be expected because of its mushrooming. Courses are grouped into four general curricula—business administration, engineering and science, medical arts and general studies (liberal arts). The original 1942 list of 15 areas of specialization within these curricula has expanded to 30, a not unusual number in view of the rapidly changing world of the last 14 years.

THE college is not afraid of the word "career," even though on many other campuses the thought of preparing anyone for a job is an anathema. Fairleigh Dickinson said at its inception that it proposed to do two things for students: "to give a cultural background of general studies that is vital and dynamic . . . and to give training in some career field so that a student may achieve economic security within a reasonable length of time after graduation.

Career training is visible everywhere, pitched in large measure to



The "Cotillion," highlight of undergraduate life, finds Anne Wilson, 1955 campus queen, curtsying before Ambassador Henrik Kauffmann of Denmark. A New York hotel is scene of this annual event.

area needs. Engineering and science is growing—there is a great demand, for example, for engineers in the big electronics industry centering on Paterson. Chemical training is expanding in view of the state's needs for chemists, and now more than 500 day students take one or more chemistry courses on the Rutherford campus.

Teachers are needed in the state's schools. Fairleigh Dickinson has inaugurated a full-fledged teacher training program. New Jersey needs dentists. A College of Dentistry will open on the Teaneck campus next year. A program has begun in industrial management, wherein students alternate work in industry with college study on a 12-month basis for four years. When Dr. Sammartino says "We have extreme flexibility," it's easy to grasp what he means.

FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON has not abandoned its two-year programs leading to an associate of arts degree, although a large percentage of those who matriculate in the two-year courses go on to win four-year degrees. The college is noted for its two-year nursing program, the first in New Jersey, and its two-year training programs for medical technologists, dental hygienists and medical assistants.

Career preparation doesn't minimize the college's aim to provide cultural

opportunity. Liberal arts training is underscored in all curricula. Every student, regardless of his major study, is required to take 18 hours of English and 18 hours of social studies. More than that, the administration seeks to make every minute on campus a cultural experience.

High standards of conduct in both dress and manner are required. All male students must wear jackets and ties at all times, and pin curlers and slacks are taboo for women on campus. Students look at all times as if they might be expecting to be interviewed for a job. The job of enforcement is in the hands of the students, and they can be severe with themselves.

THE cultural opportunities of the surrounding metropolitan area are fully utilized. Ever-changing art exhibits hang on the walls in the commons at both Teaneck and Rutherford. Classes often visit museums in New York City. Tickets to the Metropolitan Opera House and North Jersey music concerts are available on campus to students. Culture far transcends the classroom. Every week students are required to attend lectures on campus by outstanding speakers—and the ability of Dr. Sammartino to lure top national and international personalities to the campus is a never-ending

source of wonder on the part of fellow college presidents.

Student activities cover the usual campus range, with possibly a slightly heavier accent on career-linked clubs and societies than found on the average campus, although Fairleigh Dickinson is like most urban colleges in this respect. A broad social life is encouraged and ranges from weekly dance sessions when the student commons is changed into a "night club" to the highlight of undergraduate life—the Cotillion.

This annual party, held in a top New York hotel ballroom, serves as a time when 30 Fairleigh Dickinson women students make their social debuts with all the trappings (and little of the expense) of high society. Dr. Sammartino explains: "Our students find that through cooperation they can have the best in life."

Naturally the Castle has inspired names for extracurricular activities. The yearbook is the "Castlight," the nurses are the "Knightingales" and the athletic teams are the "Knights" (and it can be imagined that Fairleigh Dickinson's undergraduates were nettled when Rutgers chose "Knights" as a college nickname last year). The Maroon and White Knights do well in a wide range of athletic endeavors—just about every sport but football.

The impression is plain that Fairleigh Dickinson students like their college and appreciate having it in their midst. A visitor is struck by the neatness of buildings and grounds, by the friendly courteousness of students and faculty wherever encountered, by the relatively little noise and confusion in crowded halls during class changes. These reflect an air of maturity, an attitude of pride.

IT would be difficult to define the "average" Fairleigh Dickinson College student. Many come from families with very limited finances but many others come from well-to-do families. While most probably attend the college because of the opportunity to get an education without the expense of living away from home, many students each year who could afford to go "out of town" transfer to Fairleigh Dickinson after attending other colleges.

Nothing is gained in the search for an "average" student by looking at the faces and names of graduates in the yearbooks. Because evening and day students all receive degrees at the same time, the yearbook is a gathering of young faces and middle-aged faces, crew cuts and bald heads, light faces, dark faces and in-between faces. Students bear names derived from the Latin countries, the Scandinavian countries, the Oriental countries, the Anglo-Saxon lands and they bear too the names of "old-line" colonial families.

Look then in vain for an average face. There is none, unless it's the face of America. In the long run that may be the real influence of Fairleigh Dickinson—the proof that higher education can use community resources to meet community needs, to make it true that all young Americans who so desire will have at least an equal chance to better themselves.